

Stimulus News You Can Use

WSDOT's informal weekly update about the
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act)

Wednesday, September 30, 2009



The stimulus story this week

WSDOT continues to aggressively pursue additional federal stimulus dollars that will be distributed nationwide, applying for high speed passenger rail funds, fish passage grants, and discretionary grants for surface transportation improvements. WSDOT and local governments continue to construct American Recovery and Reinvestment Act highway projects, and have completed 38 projects. This week's project highlight describes how stimulus funds are helping preserve a 100-year-old bridge in Wenatchee.

This week by the numbers (project dollars in millions):

| <i>Individual highway projects</i> | State | Local | Total | Notes |
|---|---------------|----------------------|----------------|---|
| Total funds | \$340 | \$152 | \$492 | |
| Obligated funds* | \$222.6 (65%) | \$134.8 (89%) | \$357.4 (73%) | Funds FHWA approved All funds must be obligated by March 1, 2010 |
| Projects certified | 37 (100%) | 153 (100%) | 190 (100%) | Six new projects certified this week |
| Projects obligated | 36 (97%) | 141 (93%) | 177 (93%) | FHWA has approved some or all funds for the projects |
| Project delivery to date | | | | |
| Operationally complete | 10 (27%) | 28 (18%) | 38 (20%) | Five projects reported complete this week |
| Awarded | 28 (76%) | 132 (86%) | 160 (84%) | Three local projects awarded this week |
| Advertised | 31 (84%) | 137 (90%) | 168 (88%) | No new advertisements this week |
| Certified, awaiting advertisement | 6 (16%) | 16 (10 %) | 22 (12%) | These projects, including several receiving surplus funds, are planned for upcoming advertisement |
| <i>Safety funding buckets (\$12 stimulus)</i> | Rumble strips | Cable median barrier | Total | Notes |
| Completed | 10 | 0 | 10 | 10 projects completed this week |
| Awarded | 17 | 6 | 23 | Includes only state Recovery Act funds |
| Advertised | 27 | 7 | 34 | Includes only state Recovery Act funds |
| <i>Transit projects</i> | Large urban | Small urban | Nonurban/rural | State total/Notes |
| Percent of total \$179 awarded | 97% | 97% | 100% | 98% |
| Number of transit projects obligated | 33 of 35 | 18 of 19 | 20 of 20 | 52 of 55 FTA counts all rural projects as one project |
| <i>August employment</i> | State | Local | Total | Notes |
| Payroll | \$5 | \$4.3 | \$9.3 | Average wage is \$37/hour |

| August employment | State | Local | Total | Notes |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Hours | 130,386 | 121,739 | 252,125 | Up from 144,308 total hours in July |
| FTEs | 754 | 704 | 1,458 | FTE = 173 hours per month |
| Individuals paid in part or total with stimulus funds | 2,220 | 3,213 | 5,433 | Note: Not a count of unique employees |
| *\$4M in state enhancement funds provided to locals. While WSDOT controls \$340M, the total for obligation authority is \$344M, which is the basis of the percentages in this table, and basis for USDOT Review on 3/01/10. | | | | |

Key issues: State

- WSDOT to seek high speed rail funds** – WSDOT is applying this week in the second round of applications for a portion of the \$8 billion in Recovery Act funds dedicated for High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR). WSDOT is submitting its application for Track 2 funding which closes on October 2. The primary focus of the Track 2 projects is to develop new high speed and intercity passenger rail services, including substantial upgrades to existing services. WSDOT has a total of 25 capital rail projects that qualify for Track 2 consideration. WSDOT applied in August for nearly \$435 million in the first round of applications for Track 1 ready-to-go projects. Including both rounds of applications, WSDOT will be applying for a total of nearly \$1.3 billion in HSIPR Recovery Act funds.
- Five more Recovery Act highway projects completed** – WSDOT and local governments across Washington finished five more Recovery Act highway projects, bringing the number of completed projects to 38. The WSDOT project placed eight new low-light traffic cameras on Snoqualmie Pass. Four local governments completed preservation projects.
 - [WSDOT – I-90/Snoqualmie Pass Vicinity – Camera Replacement](#)
 - [Grant County – L-NE Overlay](#)
 - [Tumwater – Capital Boulevard Preservation Project – Dennis to Israel](#)
 - [Colfax – Fairview Street Overlay](#)
 - [San Juan County – Fisherman Bay Road](#)
- WSDOT applied for National Fish Passage Program Grant** – The WSDOT Stream Restoration Program applied on September 24 for a Recovery Act grant through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services’ National Fish Passage Program. WSDOT would direct any award from this grant towards the correction of a fish passage barrier on Anderson Creek on SR 16 in Kitsap County. WSDOT plans to remove two consecutive fish-blocking culverts and replace them with a single 20-foot wide fish passage culvert. The project would open approximately 9,300 meters (5.8 miles) of habitat for chum and coho salmon, as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout.
 - Applications are due on September 30.
 - The award ceiling is \$500,000 per project out of \$2.8 million available nationwide.

- **Workers earned over \$18 million to date on highway projects** – Employees have worked nearly 500,000 hours on state and local Recovery Act highway projects since March, earning over \$18.6 million. Employment has increased each month to date as more highway projects advance to construction.
 - Employees worked over 250,000 hours and earned more than \$9.3 million on state and local Recovery Act highway projects in August. Workers earned an average hourly wage of \$37.
 - WSDOT reports state and local employment data on Recovery Act projects each month. See the [measured employment page](#) for more information.
- **Three more highway projects awarded**
 - **Local projects**
 - [Seattle – South Spokane St. Viaduct](#)
 - [Bothell – North Creek Trail – Section 1, Stage 2 \(Schnitzer\)](#)
 - [Bothell – North Creek Trail – Section 2, Stage 2 \(Canyon Park\)](#)

Key issues: National

- **Intense nationwide competition for \$1.5 billion TIGER Grants** – The U.S. Department of Transportation announced it has received 1,400 applications for the discretionary surface transportation grant funds included in the Recovery Act. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories submitted applications totaling \$57 billion, about 38 times the \$1.5 billion available.
 - USDOT will utilize a cost-benefit analysis for all applications requesting more than \$100 million.
 - WSDOT submitted three applications for high priority projects on September 15. See the [TIGER Grant web page](#) for more information.
- **Reporting begins October 1 for first OMB report** – The White House Office of Management and Budget is collecting submissions for its first nationwide stimulus performance report on October 10. Agencies that received stimulus funds have 10 days to submit a thorough report on project spending and job creation. The report will be available to the public on October 30 on www.recovery.gov.
- **House T & I Committee Holds Hearing October 1** – The U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing October 1 on Recovery Act project performance and employment to date.
 - Washington submitted a status report to the committee on September 17. WSDOT's latest reports are posted on the stimulus [reporting webpage](#).
 - The next report is expected to be submitted in November.
- **Almost 4,000 Recovery Act highway projects under construction nationwide** – The FHWA [website](#) reported that 3,966 stimulus projects costing \$11 billion are under construction in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and on federal lands. The FHWA has obligated \$19.2 billion of \$26.8 billion (72%) to 7,965 projects.

Stimulus project of the week

Stimulus provides long overdue bridge painting project in Wenatchee

Work is underway to repaint the 100 year-old [Columbia River Bridge](#) and stimulate the Wenatchee area economy at the same time.

The 1,000-foot long bridge between Wenatchee and East Wenatchee supports a huge irrigation pipe and a pedestrian and bicycle path, which is part of the ten-mile Apple Capital Loop Trail. The City of Wenatchee maintains and operates the bridge and along with local agency partners, recently completed more than a \$100,000 in structural repairs to the century-old bridge so it could continue to be used as a critical link in this unique, nationally recognized trail.



The city also determined that the future of the bridge was dependent on significant preservation measures; chief among them, a paint job. The price tag for the first repainting since the bridge was built in 1908 was well beyond the resources of the City and its partners. A solution came in the form of the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) funds. The project received \$1,506,749 to clean, paint, illuminate, and add safety and security features. Gary Owen, Wenatchee City Engineer, said the project is not as easy as it might sound, “The project entails cleaning the entire structure with high pressure water, rust removal with hand tools, priming of bare metal, and painting of the entire structure with two coats of paint. All water and debris must be pumped off the bridge and placed in containers, tested, and disposed of in a sewer treatment plant for the filtered water and a landfill for the paint chips and other debris.”

The bridge must be closed to bikes and pedestrians while the work is underway. The nearby SR 285 Senator George Sellar Bridge, just a few hundred yards downstream had been closed to pedestrian traffic since May due to a construction project adding another eastbound lane. That project removes the sidewalks from the bridge, replacing them with a new structure being added to the south side of the bridge, but that facility won’t be finished until late next year.

The pipeline bridge closes to traffic by October 1 and the Sellar Bridge sidewalk and trail connection will open by then. It is likely, that due to weather, the pipeline bridge painting project will have to shut down for winter and finish next spring. The contractor for the project is F.D. Thomas, Inc. of Central Point, Oregon.

Important dates

- **October 1:** Congressional T & I Committee holds stimulus hearing
- **October 2:** Applications for Track 2 FRA High-Speed Passenger Rail grants are due
- **October 10:** WSDOT submits first new federal OMB quarterly performance report
- **October 30:** [Recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov) to publish OMB performance reports online
- **November 20:** Next congressional status report due

Websites of interest

- WSDOT recovery act website: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulus>
- Washington recovery act website: <http://www.recovery.wa.gov/>
- Federal recovery act website: <http://www.recovery.gov/>
- FHWA recovery site: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/index.htm>
- Federal Transit Administration recovery site: www.fta.dot.gov/recovery
- Federal Rail Administration recovery site: www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/2153
- Federal Aviation Administration recovery site: <http://www.faa.gov/recovery>
- OMB recovery website: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/recovery_default/